

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2019

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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C O N F I D E N T I A L L E N I N G R A D 0306

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CVIS, UR, US

SUBJECT: ASSIGNMENT OF CORRESPONDENTS TO LENINGRAD AND SAN
FRANCISCO

REF: STATE 41353, MOSCOW 2714,

1. CONGEN IS PLEASED THAT UPI PROCEEDING WITH PROPOSAL TO HAVE
CORRESPONDENT STATIONED IN LENINGRAD. NEEDLESS TO SAY, WE ARE
PREPARED TO ASSIST UPI REPRESENTATIVE IN ANY WAY POSSIBLE AND
WE ENVISION MUTUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONGEN AND
UPI OFFICE HERE. OUR FEELING, BASED ON MANY CONVERSATIONS WITH
LENINGRAD OFFICIALS ABOUT THE "LENINGRAD ROLE" IN SOVIET ECONOMIC
AND SOCIAL PLANNING, IS THAT MOST OF THESE OFFICIALS WILL WELCOME
UPI OFFICE AS APPROPRIATE NOD TO THIS ROLE AND AREA'S IMPORTANCE.
ONLY EXCEPTION, OF COURSE, WOULD BE LOCAL SECURITY ORGANS WHO,
WE SUSPECT, HAVE CONSIDERED ABSENCE OF RESIDENT WESTERN PRESS IN
LENINGRAD AS MEANS OF AVOIDING DISCOMFITING PRESS SPOTLIGHT THAT
FOCUSES REGULARLY IN MOSCOW ON QUESTIONS OF EMIGRATION,
DISSIDENCE, ECONOMIC FAILINGS, ETC.

2. CONGEN STRONGLY RECOMMENDS THAT UPI BE VERY FIRM IN
INSISTENCE ON BEST POSSIBLE FACILITIES FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND
HOUSING. LEVERAGE WHICH APPLIES INITIALLY WILL BECOME MUCH
WEAKER IF UPI ARRIVES ON SCENE AND ONLY THEN TAKES UP QUESTIONS
WITH LENINGRAD CITY AUTHORITIES. FOR EXAMPLE, UPI MIGHT ASK FOR
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SUITABLE HOUSING IN CENTRAL LENINGRAD RATHER THAN DIPLOMATIC

GHETTO BUILDING ON VASIL'YEVSKIY ISLAND.

3. UPI DISCUSSIONS WITH SOVIETS SHOULD ALSO SEEK FULLEST POSSIBLE ASSURANCES REGARDING CORRESPONDENT'S REGULAR ACCESS TO BALTIC CAPITALS SINCE WE BELIEVE THESE AREAS WILL OFFER GOOD HUNTING FOR STORIES. FREQUENT VISITS TO BALTIC AREAS SHOULD ENABLE UPI CORRESPONDENT TO DEVELOP SOURCES AND RELATIONSHIPS WHICH WILL MAKE HIS REPORTING MORE VALID AND CONSISTENT THAN SOME OF THE "SNAPSHOT" ARTICLES WHICH EMERGE FROM MOSCOW-BASED CORRESPONDENTS' OCCASIONAL VISITS.

4. CONSUL GENERAL, DPO, AND BPAO WOULD WELCOME OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS ASPECTS OF SITUATION WITH UPI'S EUROPEAN MANAGER, JULIUS HUMI, IF HE VISITS LENINGRAD IN CONNECTION WITH POSSIBLE TRIP TO MOSCOW FOR TALKS WITH ZAMYATIN.
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